



# La Voz

Newsletter of the National Organization of Professional Hispanic  
Natural Resources Conservation Service Employees

April, 2006

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## President's Message

By Bertha Venegas  
NOPHNRCE President

The 2006 NOPNRCE Conference planning is in full swing. The preliminary agenda is included in this newsletter. The impact of Farm Bill legislation, national priorities, technology, and business tools means that NRCS employees must refresh and improve their expertise. The training conference provides a forum to help make NRCS a stronger supporter of our nation's agriculture and natural resources and a better place for our employees to work and develop their full potential.

This year's theme, **Hispanics - Helping People Conserve the Land, Hispanos - Ayudando a la Gente a Conservar la Tierra** reflects the fact that the people we help are able to help the land function as a living, sustainable system that provides a high standard of living and quality of life for



today and for future generations.

Budgets are tight and for those with the opportunity to attend, it will fulfill some of your training needs. During the conference, you are expected to be in attendance if you are on government time and expense. A system of checks and balances will be implemented to ensure that you receive confirmation of the training sessions. The Rosen Centre Hotel will honor the \$83 per night room rate three days prior and three days after our conference for those wishing to spend some of their time in Florida.

*See you in Florida!*  
**Bertha T. Venegas**

The National  
Council, 2005-2006

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## National Organization of Professional Hispanic Natural Resources Conservation Service Employees (NOPH-NRCSE)

***“Hispanics- Helping People Conserve the Land: Hispanos- Ayudando a la Gente a Conservar la Tierra”***

### TO MEMBERSHIP AND PARTNERS

The 2006 Training Conference of the National Organization of Professional Hispanic Natural Resources Conservation Service Employees (NOPHNRCSE) has been approved by NRCS and you can find the approval at: [http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/intranet/hispanic/documents/2006\\_Mtg\\_Approval.pdf](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/intranet/hispanic/documents/2006_Mtg_Approval.pdf)

The ***Hispanics, Helping People Conserve the Land: Hispanos, Ayudando a la Gente a Conservar la Tierra*** conference is scheduled for July 24-27, 2006 at the Rosen Centre Hotel, 9840 International Drive, Orlando, Florida.

The Rosen Centre Hotel <http://www.rosencentrehotel.com> will be taking reservations at **1-800-204-7234**. Reservations can also be made online through the following link: [https://reservations.ihotelier.com/crs/g\\_reservation.cfm?groupID=15445&hotelID=2018](https://reservations.ihotelier.com/crs/g_reservation.cfm?groupID=15445&hotelID=2018) During the conference we will be occupied with training but the hotel will honor the \$83 rate for single or double per day three days before the conference and three days after based on availability for those wishing to spend some of their vacation time in Florida. Make sure to reserve your room **before the June 21, 2006** cut off date.

Transportation to and from the airport is provided by Mears. Roundtrip is approximately \$26.00 per adult. Mears transportation can be reached at (407) 839-1570 or 24-Hour reservations (407-423-5566).

Information will be posted on our website <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/intranet/hispanic/> as it becomes available. I have attached a draft agenda and the official registration form. Questions can be directed to Lori Valadez, Planning Chair, at [lori.valadez@mt.usda.gov](mailto:lori.valadez@mt.usda.gov) or (406) 587-6842.

*Look forward to seeing you in Florida!*



## **Last Call for Posters and Technical Papers**

**Action Required by: April 7<sup>th</sup> , 2006**

The Natural Resources Committee of the National Organization of Professional Hispanic NRCS Employees (NOPHNRCSE) is calling for posters and technical papers for our next training conference to be held July 24<sup>th</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup>, 2006 in Orlando, Florida.

The Conference theme is “Hispanics – Helping People Conserve the Land Hispanos – Ayudando a la Gente a Conservar la Tierra.” If you have been working on an innovative project or unique ways to outreach minority customers, please consider presenting a poster or a technical paper.

The selected presenters may attend at government time and expenses, with approval from supervisor and State Conservationist concurrence. If you are interested in presenting a technical paper or a poster; please review the following details of the submission process and take part in the 2006 NOPHNRCSE annual training conference!

### **INSTRUCTIONS FOR SUBMITTING PROPOSALS**

Proposals may be submitted by email to Luis.Hernández@ar.usda.gov or by mailing the proposal to: USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service / ATTN.: Luis A. Hernández / Room 3416 / Federal Building / 700 West Capitol Avenue / Little Rock, AR, 72201. His telephone number is 501-301-3116.

Information required for paper and/or poster presentations include:

- Title of Presentation.
- Presenter's name, affiliation, address, phone, fax, and email.
- Contact Person (if different from presenter) phone and email.
- Abstract of 200 words or less in a word document (Font - Times New Roman, Style - Regular, Size -12).

There are two ways you can propose to be part of our 2006 conference program:

### **1. Oral Concurrent Presentations**

Oral concurrent sessions will take place during this training conference. Oral sessions are opportunities to share the results of an outreach effort, conservation research projects, and/or lessons learned through professional experience with conservation projects, programs, and technologies. Oral concurrent sessions are 60 minutes in length. Each presenter will be given 30 minutes — 20 to 25 minutes to make the presentation and 5 to 10 minutes for questions and answers.

*Please Note:* The **natural resources committee** will carefully review all submissions. To the extent possible, submissions not selected for oral presentations will be reviewed for presentation as **Posters**.

### **2. Poster Presentations**

Posters will be on display from Monday afternoon through Wednesday afternoon. Presenters **will be required** to be at their boards at specific times (TBD) during which, presenters will answer questions and explain their experiences and results to conference attendees. A poster presentation entails affixing printed materials (typed information, photos, graphs, etc.) to a poster board. Audiovisual equipment might be used but it will not be permitted to be the sole content of the poster. Freestanding displays will be considered for poster presentation at a case by case basis.

### **Timeline:**

- **April 7<sup>th</sup> , 2006 – Deadline for submittal of proposals.**
- **April 28<sup>th</sup> , 2006– Final Decision for acceptance of Abstracts.**
- **June 2<sup>nd</sup> , 2006 – Submittal of final presentation and equipment needs.**
- **July 24<sup>th</sup> , 2006 – Arrival at the Conference site and Presenter Meeting.**

For questions contact Luis A. Hernández at 501-301-3116 or via email, Luis.Hernández@ar.usda.gov.

### **DONATE ITEMS FOR AUCTION**

*By Stella Santos, Scholarship Committee*

I would like to encourage the membership to start thinking about donations of items for the auction, the proceeds from this event helps support our scholarship program build our scholarship endowment fund. Call me with questions at 830-278-2014 x101. You may want to consider bringing something unique from your area.

## Conference Exhibit Opportunity to promote your products and/or services!

The 2006 NOPHNRCSE Annual Training Conference is scheduled for July 24 – July 27, 2006 in Orlando, Florida at the Rosen Centre Hotel. We are making available exhibit space to interested organizations that wish to display their information, services, and/or wares at our Training Conference. We are expecting about 250 conservation professionals from across the country as well as additional attendees from “sister organizations,” also from across the country.

This is a Great Opportunity for your organization to visit with Conservation Professionals and to showcase your company. For more information or to reserve your space, please contact Brunilda Velez at (715) 672-8663 x 21 or via email [brunilda.velez@wi.usda.gov](mailto:brunilda.velez@wi.usda.gov). Mail contact: c/o Brunilda Velez: NRCS - Pepin Co. Government Center P.O. Box 39 Durand, WI 54736-1628 on Service Center; 740 7th Ave. W, Durand, WI 54736. Exhibitors are asked to set up on Monday, July 24<sup>th</sup>, and breakdown their exhibits on Thursday, July 27<sup>th</sup> after 3:30 PM.

The cost for this opportunity is \$575 per Exhibit Space. Each Exhibit Space will include an 8'x 8' floor space, a table, two chairs, listing in the Conference Program, and one Conference Registration Fee. The Exhibit Area is located near the conference activities, where there will be ample exposure and opportunity to meet with hundreds of Conservation Professionals.

### General Conference Schedule

Monday, July 24, 2006  
Arrival of Conference Attendees  
Conference Registration  
Leadership Training  
Exhibit Set-up

Wednesday, July 26, 2006  
Conservation Tours  
Technical Presentations & Posters  
State Conservationist's Breakfast

Tuesday, July 25, 2006  
Opening Session Presentations  
Agency Presentations  
Luncheon  
Scholarship Night Program

Thursday, July 27, 2006  
Professional Development Sessions  
Luncheon (Motivational Speaker)  
Awards Banquet  
Dance

[Call now to reserve your space!!!](#)



## Exhibitor Registration Form

Organization Name \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Email address \_\_\_\_\_

Name on Badge \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Badge #2 \_\_\_\_\_

Need electricity - Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Need table - Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Special Needs: \_\_\_\_\_

**Note:** Registration includes: access to Conference activities, breakfast, luncheon, scholarship, night activities and Conservation Tour ticket which includes a lunch.

### **Please make checks payable to:**

NOPHNRCSE – Exhibits  
c/o Brunilda Velez  
**USDA-NRCS**  
P.O. Box 39  
Durand, WI 54736-1628

***Thanks for your support!!!***

## **Living History of NOPHNCRCSE (as told by it's members)**

**A proposal by Sharyn Alvarez, National FWPM**

**Action:** Develop a history of NOPHNCRCSE through the words, thoughts and memories of its members.

**Purpose:** To capture information of the Organizations beginnings as well as its accomplishments during its 14 years of existence from the people who know.

**Format:** Have each member interested write an essay (500 words maximum) about an aspect of the organizations history as they remember it.

**Essays can be written on topics such as:**

**NOPHNCRCSE** – The Beginning

The Officers (written by those who served as):

- Presidents
- Vice-Presidents
- Executive Vice-Presidents
- Treasurer
- Secretaries

**The Committees**

Perspectives of Committee Chairs – how they developed the committee, the accomplishments.

Perspectives of Committee Members – recalling their participation.

**The Training Conferences**

Each writer can write an essay on a particular training conference of their choice.

**Membership** – what it has meant to be a member of NOPHNCRCSE.

Editing: Please make sure that your composition submission is reviewed and proofread for content, clarity and grammatical accuracy.

Result: We will have a collection of NOPHNCRCSE History as told by the members who experienced it. Everyone's voice would be heard. History is not the story of an event as told by one person. It must be an accurate reflection that includes the thoughts of all who experienced the events.

**Deadline: January 31, 2007.** There is plenty of time to get your composition in. Smile!

All who are interested in participating in this activity, please send your composition to Sharyn via e-mail at: [sharyn.alvarez@wdc.usda.gov](mailto:sharyn.alvarez@wdc.usda.gov)





**National Organization of Professional Hispanic Natural Resources  
Conservation Service  
Employees (NOPHNCSE)**

**13<sup>th</sup> Annual Training Conference**

**“Hispanics- Helping People Conserve the Land: Hispanos- Ayudan-  
do a la Gente a Conservar la Tierra”**

**Rosen Centre Hotel  
July 24-27, 2006**

**DRAFT AGENDA AT A GLANCE**

**Sunday (July 23rd)**

1:00 p.m. Planning Team Meeting  
Moderators Meeting  
Local Arrangements Chair  
Student Activity Chair  
Exhibitor Setup  
7:00 p.m. NOPHNCSE COUNCIL Meeting

**Monday (July 24th)**

7:00 a.m. - 8:00 a.m. National Council Meeting/Planning Committee  
8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. HEPM Training  
Registration  
1:00 p.m. - 4:30 p.m. Training Topics  
Agreements  
OPM Retirement Education Prototype  
Effective Writing for KSA's  
Correspondence Management  
5:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. No Host Reception  
6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. NOPHNCSE Business Meeting

**Tuesday (July 25th)**

8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Civil Rights Committee Meeting  
8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Registration  
7:00 a.m. - 7:45 a.m. Continental Breakfast  
8:00 am - 9:15 a.m. Opening Ceremony & General Session  
Presentation of Colors/ National Anthem  
Chief Bruce Knight, Chief, NRCS (Invited)  
Richard “Dick” Coombe, Regional Assistant Chief, East (invited)  
Niles Glasgow, State Conservationist, Florida  
Local Elected Official  
Bertha Venegas, President, NOPHNCSE  
9:15 a.m. Ricardo Bayon - Market Based Conservation (invited)  
Tuesday (July 25th)



## **Tuesday (July 25th)**

10:15 a.m. Break

10:30 a.m. Motivational Speaker (TBA)

11:30 a.m. Organization Presidents

Jose Osegueda, President NAHFE (Confirmed)

NOPBNRCSE - Charles Adams (Confirmed)

APIO - Pooh Vongkhamdy (Invited)

AIANEA - Crystal Leonetti (Invited)

11:50 a.m. Break for Lunch

12:00 to 1:15pm LUNCHEON - Speaker

Dr. Galvan (invited)

1:30 p.m. - General Session

\* Carl Lucero - Market Based Conservation

\* Patty Lawrence - NRCS Strategic Plan

3:00 p.m. - 3:15 p.m.

Break

3:15 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.

\* Kevin Brown NRCS Capital Plan

\* Dr. Linda Varner Mount, Ph.D Civil Rights Division

4:30 pm

Adjourn

5:30 p.m. - 6:30 pm

Reception

6:30 p.m. - 9:00 pm

Scholarship Night Activities

## **Wednesday (July 26th)**

7:00 a.m. - 8:30 a.m.

State Conservationist's Breakfast

8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Civil Rights Committee Meeting

8:30 a.m.

NRCS Business Tools - Business Tools Team

10:00 a.m.

Adjourn/Prepare for Tour Departure

10:30 a.m.

Depart Hotel for Technical Tours

5:00 p.m.

Return to Hotel

Open Night

**Thursday (July 27th)**

8:00 a.m. Civil Rights Committee Meeting

8:00 a.m. General Session

Rural Hispanics At A Glance - ERS - William Kandell (confirmed)

Census 2006 - USDA Count - - Juan Marinez, Michigan State University  
(confirmed)

Center for Rural Affairs - Kathy Starkweather, NE (confirmed)

9:30 a.m. Hispanic Orchards Integrated Pest Management Educational – Program - Larry Elworth

10:30 a.m. BREAK

10:45 a.m. East Region Remote Sensing Laboratory - The New NRI

11:15 a.m. NRI Tools and Applications

11:30 a.m. LUNCH ON YOUR OWN

12:30 p.m. Reconvene

Technical Presentations

Technical Posters

TX Alliance for Water Conservation

East Central National Technology Center

4:30 pm. Adjourn

5:30 p.m. - 6:30 p.m. No Host Reception

6:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. Banquet

8:30 p.m. Dance

## **Michael (Mikey) Anthony Castillo Memorial Fund**

### **Michael (Mikey) Anthony Castillo Memorial Fund**

In early March, Michael Castillo, Representative for the South Central Regional, lost his son Michael (Mikey) Anthony (21 years old) in a tragic accident. Our deepest sympathies go out to Michael, Aleida and Mathew.

For those who have been asking, a Memorial fund was set up on behalf of Mikey Castillo at the International Bank of Commerce (IBC), Acct. # 1410030423, ATTN: Teresa Cano, 349 Main Street, Eagle Pass, Texas 78852. Checks can be written to IBC Bank and in the memo section put the account # and Michael Castillo Memorial Fund.

### **Nominations for Membership Awards**

The Awards Committee has posted the nominations form and complete guidelines on the NOPHNRCSE page in the Conference Information link. The Awards Team is soliciting your nominations for Awards recipients. We feel that there are employees in our agency and organization who contribute far beyond the call of duty. This is an excellent opportunity to voice your appreciation and nominate them of an award. Please be prompt and send them to Tony Resendez by April 28, 2006.